REF.	ACTIONS	PARTNERS (lead partners in bold)
33.1	**Promote understanding and awareness of the River Dee and its conservation importance amongst all recreational users.**	**SNH** / **AC** / **ACC** / **CNPA** / VisitScotland / FES / FCS / Rangers / ACP / COAT / **DDSFB**
33.1.1	Promote responsible access to riparian areas, particularly in urban areas and in accordance with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. - Develop information for distribution from Tourist Information Centres. - Publish version of information on relevant websites - Mount displays at popular access points	**AC** / **ACC** / **CNPA** / FES / FCS / Rangers / SNH / ACP / COAT / VisitScotland
33.1.2	Promote visitor use of selected riverside sites that have appropriate capacity for day visitor activities (picnicking etc).	**AC** / **ACC** / **CNPA** Rangers / SNH / ACP / COAT / VisitScotland
33.1.3	Raise awareness of the potential transfer of diseases such as *Gyrodactylus* on canoes or fishing equipment	AC / ACC / **DDSFB** / SCA
33.2	**Identify the issues of importance to all recreational user groups on the river, including any conflicts between them, and promote understanding of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.**	**AC** / **ACC** / **CNPA** / FCS / **SNH** / Local community / Site users / Fishing proprietors
33.2.1	Review River Dee Access and Fishing Study (RDA&FS) in light of Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.	**AC** / **ACC** / **CNPA**
33.2.2	Undertake assessments to consider the impacts of all access and recreation activities on the natural environment of the area.	**SNH** / AC/ ACC / CNPA / FCS
33.3	**Identify and implement management options which will address the recreation issues associated with river and lochs, benefit the local economy and protect the natural heritage.**	**AC** / **ACC** / **CNPA** / FCS / COAT / Land owners / Local communities / Rangers / VisitScotland / CNPA / SNH / CNPA
33.3.1	Prioritise the Management Options/Mechanisms from the reviewed River Dee Access and Fishing Study and establish a Delivery Plan.	AC / ACC / CNPA
33.3.2	Identify early actions and delivery mechanisms with links to existing initiatives such as LAs and CNPA Outdoor Access Strategies and COAT.	AC / ACC / CNPA / COAT
33.3.3	Use lessons learnt from the implementation of the RDA&FS Delivery Plan to role out similar actions (where appropriate) for other water bodies within the Dee catchment e.g. Loch of Skene.	AC / ACC / CNPA
33.4	**Ensure sites without adequate facilities, that are popular for recreation, are managed to address any identified problems caused by poor sanitation and impacting on the environment.**	**AC** / **ACC** / **CNPA** / FCS / Rangers / AGTB / MCofS / NEMT / COAT / Site Users / SEPA / SW / SNH / NTS / Landowners /
33.4.1	Identify sites used on a regular basis for camping, bothying or other activities without facilities, and assess significance of impacts.	AC / ACC / CNPA
33.4.2	Investigate options for additional official campsites, education over responsible use, and litter collection facilities	AC / ACC / CNPA
33.4.3	Develop costed action plans for each site.	AC / ACC / CNPA

Acronyms are listed in the centre of this Action Card

33.Access and recreation.indd Spread 1 of 2 - Pages(4, 1)



access & recreation 33

ACCESS & RECREATION

OBJECTIVE 33. Ensure the catchment's water environment is protected from the impacts of recreational activity.

BACKGROUND

With its numerous forests, lochs, rivers, and hills, the catchment of the River Dee is an excellent area for outdoor recreation. Increasing public use is being made of the river and its surrounding catchment for recreational purposes, which may partly be attributable to the new access rights conferred by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (LRSA), as well as to the general increase in leisure time and the associated rise in popularity of outdoor sports. The main recreational activities undertaken on Deeside include: walking and orienteering, camping, climbing, cycling, kayaking/canoeing, mountain biking, horse riding, fishing, shooting, and skiing.

Recreation has an important contribution to make to both the local economy of Deeside and the wellbeing of local residents. Many thousands of people visit Deeside each year - from elsewhere in Scotland and from further afield. The hills and glens of Deeside are also working estates and the activities they provide (hunting, shooting and fishing) generate significant income for the local area.

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, enacted on the 9th February 2005, has established a statutory right of responsible access to most land and inland waters. To help encourage responsible use of the countryside the Scottish Government, in association with Scottish Natural Heritage, has produced a Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC); the SOAC gives detailed guidance on the responsibilities of people who are exercising access rights and of those who manage land and water. The LRSA sets out where and when access rights apply; the Code defines how access rights should be exercised and how land managers should manage land and water responsibly for access..



Walkers in Glen Muick (COAT)

WHO IS INVOLVED?

- Aberdeenshire Council
- Aberdeen City Council
- Aberdeen Countryside Project
- Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board
- Cairngorms National Park Authority
- Cairngorms Outdoot Access Trust
- Local community
- Dee District Salmon Fishery Board
- Forestry Commission Scotland
- Forest Enterprise Scotland
- Fishing Proprietors
- Landowners
- Mountaineering Council of Scotland
- North East Mountain Trust
- Rangers
- Site Users
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Scottish Water
- VisitScotland

Further copies can be downloaded at www.theriverdee.org. For further information contact the Dee Catchment Officer c/o The Macaulay Institute, Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen AB15 8QH Telephone: 01224 498200 email: info@theriverdee.org

deecatchment partnership

20/03/2008 09:49:57

ISSUES

- Litter is associated with many recreational activities and this can harm wildlife, as well as detracting from the area's appearance.
- Human waste is a problem in popular areas where there is no public convenience.
- Litter and toileting associated with wild camping (when the nearest facilities can be some distance away) are particular problems.
- It is possible for some recreational activities to conflict with each other; in particular interactions between those fishing, paddling and walking can on occasion conflict, detracting from the enjoyment of all.
- River engineering works/bankside management associated with fishery management can sometimes affect bankside habitats.
- Riverside paths can cause bankside erosion.
- Increasing recreation use may increase wildlife disturbance.
- The principal issue is to ensure that all activities themselves do not have a detrimental impact on the natural environment, as it is the quality and beauty of this environment that attract people to the area.

EXISTING / RECENT INITIATIVES

- The Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC) sets out the rights and responsibilities of recreational users and land mangers.
- The Upper Deeside Access Trust (UDAT) expanded its area to cover the Cairngorms National Park in April 2008 and is renamed as the Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust (COAT).
- Programme of access developments:
  - Eastern Cairngorms Access Project (ECAP) run by the Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust.
  - Aberdeenshire Countryside Access Strategy (supported by Aberdeenshire Council, Scottish Natural Heritage and local communities)
  - Aberdeen City Access Strategy
  - Cairngorms National Park Outdoor Access Strategy
  - Enjoying the Outdoors.
- Local Authorities, including the CNPA, are undertaking the Core Path Planning process which is one of their duties set out in the LRSA.
- Current initiatives that aim to improve recreational provision whilst at the same time trying to reduce user conflict and the effect that these activities have on the nature conservation of the area include COAT (based in Upper Deeside) and Aberdeen Countryside Project (ACP) (based in Aberdeen). These projects have a remit to develop access and improve biodiversity in partnership with local communities.
- To examine perceived conflicts between recreational activities the Dee Salmon Fishery Improvement Association (DSFIA), Aberdeenshire council (AC) and SNH commissioned a study during 2002/ 2003. - River Dee Access and Fishing Study 2003 (RDA&FS). The general conclusions of the study were that relationships between the various users of the river are on the whole very cordial, but there are a number of 'hotspots' that require some management.
- SNH will continue to promote understanding with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and Aberdeenshire Council and CNPA will continue to publicise the Code.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

- Assess the impacts of the various types of access and recreational activities on the natural environment.
- Prepare information and guidance, where relevant, to advise users of appropriate and responsible use.
- Review the 2003 River Dee Access and Fishing Study in light of the recent enactment of the LRSA to ensure that the findings and associated management options/proposed mechanisms are still appropriate and relevant.
- Prioritise the management options/mechanisms and begin to implement them through the development of a delivery plan outlining the programme of activity
- Continue with awareness raising activities of the SOAC aimed at each of the user groups making them aware of the issues and their responsibilities.
- Identify issues not easily addressed by the SOAC e.g. strimming of banks along fishing beats, and develop guidance for fishing clubs/owners.
- Ensure Actions integrate with 'Access Authorities' Outdoor Access Strategies.



Canoeists at Potarch (S. Langan)

LEGISLATION

See Action Pack Annex for information sources

- Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and Associated Scottish Outdoor Access Code
- Nature Conservation Act 2003

GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

See Action Pack Annex for information sources

- Forest enterprise Scotland Recreation Strategy
- Scottish Outdoor Access Code:
  - www.outdooraccess-scotland.com
  - www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk
  - www.cairngorms.com
  - www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

BENEFITS TO PROTECTED SPECIES

The following specially protected species will benefit from the Actions:

- Freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*
- Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*
- Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*
- River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*
- Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*

33 ACCESS & RECREATION

RELATED ACTION CARDS

24. Bankside grasslands

AC Aberdeenshire Council **ACC** Aberdeen City Council **ACP** Aberdeen Countryside Project **CNPA** Cairngorms National Park Authority **COAT** Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust **DDSFB** Dee District Salmon Fishery Board **FCS** Forestry commission Scotland **FWAG** Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group **FES** Forest Enterprise Scotland **MCofS** The Mountaineering Council of Scotland **NEMT** North East Mountain Trust **SNH** Scottish Natural Heritage **SW** Scottish Water

deecatchment partnership

33.Access and recreation.indd Spread 2 of 2 - Pages(2, 3) 20/03/2009 09:20:39